

Application Serial No. 09/159,503

Attorney Docket No. COS97101

REMARKS

Claims 59 and 60 have been amended to improve form and claims 16 and 61 have been amended to correct minor typographical errors. Claims 1, 3-5 and 7-96 remain pending in this application.

Initially, the applicants wish to thank Examiner Backer for the courtesy extended during the telephonic interview on July 8, 2004.

At the outset, the applicants note that prosecution in this application was re-opened after the applicants requested re-instatement of the Appeal filed September 16, 2003 and filed a Supplemental Appeal Brief on January 26, 2004.

In the non-final Office Action dated April 28, 2004, claims 1, 3-5, 7-15, 56-60 and 96 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dunn et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,118,780) in view of Dustan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,884,312).

At the start of the telephonic interview, Examiner Backer indicated that he (and Supervisory Patent Examiner Trammell) reviewed the outstanding rejection prior to the interview. Examiner Backer indicated that the pending rejection would be withdrawn and that all active claims are allowable. The applicants acknowledge, with appreciation, the Examiner's indication that all active claims are allowable.

Claims 59 and 60 have hereby been amended to improve form. Since these claims are dependent upon independent claim 56, which was indicated as being allowable, claims 59 and 60 should also remain allowable for at least the reasons claim 56 is allowable.

The applicants also note that original claims 1-95 were subjected to a Restriction Requirement. In response to the Restriction Requirement, the applicants added claim 96, which as indicated in the Response to Restriction Requirement filed September 10, 2001, is a linking claim that links the claims related to Group I (Claims 1-60 and 92-95) and the claims related to Group II (Claims 61-91). Since claim 96 has been indicated as being

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allowable, the applicants respectfully respect that the restriction requirement be withdrawn in accordance with MPEP § 809. As such, the applicants respectfully request examination of previously withdrawn claims 16-55 and 61-95.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejection, examination of previously withdrawn claims 16-55 and 61-95 and the timely allowance of this application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 13-2491 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: July 28, 2004

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